

Message Text

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ORIGIN PRS-01

INFO OCT-01 PA-02 CCO-00 ISO-00 SS-15 SSO-00 ONY-00 /019 R

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O 282003Z NOV 76 ZFF4

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY MEXICO IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS STATE 290742 TOSEC 310209

FOR COVEY FROM BROWN (S/PRS), MEXICO FOR FUNSET'

E.O11652: N/A

TAGS:SOPN, OVIP (KISSINGER, HENRY A.)

SUBJECT: WASHINGTON POST ARTICLE ON TRANSITION.

THE FOLLOWING IS THE FULL TEXT OF A NOVEMBER 28 WASHINGTON
POST ARTICLE BY MURREY MARDER, "TRANSITION STAFF OFFERING
OPTIONS." BEGIN TEXT:

FOREIGN POLICY OPTION PAPERS BEING PREPARED BY PRESIDENT-
ELECT JIMMY CARTER'S TRANSITION STAFF GENERALLY WILL NOT
OFFER SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION, ACCORDING TO
STAFF MEMBERS.

MEMBERS OF THE TRANSITION STAFF ARE PRIVATELY BEMUSED
BY PRESS SPECULATION THAT THEY ARE "LOCKING IN" THE
POLICY OF THE INCOMING ADMINISTRATION IN THE PAPERS THEY
ARE DRAFTING.

ACCORDING TO STAFF MEMBERS, WHO WILL DISCUSS THEIR WORK
ONLY ON A NOT-FOR-ATTRIBUTION BASIS, THE SYSTEM IN
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USE RULES OUT WRITING "ADVOCACY PAPERS."

FOR ONE THING, THE AIDES ARE THEMSELVES IN THE DARK ABOUT WHO THE CABINET MEMBERS WILL BE.

"IF YOU CANNOT ANTICIPATE WHO THE SECRETARY OF STATE IS

GOING TO BE," SAID ONE AIDE, "YOU ARE GOING TO GIVE HIM GOOD, STRAIGHT STAFF WORK ... WE ARE NOT ANTICIPATING ANY POLICY VIEWPOINT -- EXCEPT WHERE THE PRESIDENT-ELECT HAS LAID DOWN A GENERAL THEME."

WHAT MAKES THIS FOREIGN POLICY TRANSITION PROCESS DIFFERENT FROM OTHERS IS THE LACK OF ANY RECORD BY THE PRESIDENT-ELECT IN THE FIELD OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS.

ADDITIONALLY, FOREIGN POLICY HAS BECOME AN INCREASINGLY OVERLAPPING MIXTURE OF DIPLOMATIC, MILITARY AND ECONOMIC INTERESTS.

AS A RESULT, NOT ONLY THE PRESIDENT, THE SECRETARY OF STATE AND THE PRESIDENT'S NATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS ADVISER WILL BE SHAPING FOREIGN POLICY -- FUTURE SECRETARIES OF DEFENSE AND TREASURY ALSO WILL BE MAJOR FORMULATORS. THE PERSONAL INTERACTION BETWEEN THE APPOINTEES, AND THE AUTHORITY THAT CARTER ALLOWS THEM, WILL DETERMINE THE FOREIGN POLICY ORIENTATION OF THE INCOMING ADMINISTRATION, WHICH THE PRESIDENT-ELECT HAS EMPHASIZED HE WILL CONTROL.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TRANSITION STAFF WORK, THEREFORE, SHOULD NOT BE EXAGGERATED.

ACCORDING TO OFFICIALS ON BOTH SIDES OF THE TRANSITION AT THE STATE DEPARTMENT, THE PROCESS HAS BEGUN HARMONIOUSLY ALTHOUGH ANTHONY LAKE, WHO HEADS THE CARTER TRANSITION STAFF, WAS A FORMER AIDE AND THEN A CRITIC OF SECRETARY OF STATE HENRY A. KISSINGER, THEIR PRESENT RELATIONSHIP IS COOPERATIVE.

LAKE'S STAFF OF A HALF-DOZEN (PLUS THREE CONSULTANTS) IS OPERATING FROM FIRST-FLOOR OFFICES IN THE DEPARTMENT.
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THE TRANSITION TEAM IS NOT RECEIVING, AND HAS NOT ASKED FOR, CABLE TRAFFIC ABOUT ONGOING NEGOTIATIONS.

THE TRANSITION STAFF IS EXPLORING THE STRUCTURE OF THE DEPARTMENT -- "NOT JUST THE CHARTS," SAID ONE, BUT "THE REAL RELATIONSHIPS." THE PRIMARY TASK IS IDENTIFYING ISSUES "LIKELY TO COME UP IN THE FIRST SIX MONTHS" OF THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION, AND DRAFTING "OPTION PAPERS --

WITHOUT RECOMMENDATIONS" FOR THE MOST PART.

THESE PAPERS ARE INTENDED FOR THE SECRETARY OF STATE-
DESIGNATE. BEFORE THE JAN. 20 INAUGURATION, THE
NOMINEE PRESUMABLY WILL MOVE INTO AN OFFICE IN THE DEPART-
MENT, ACCORDING TO PAST PRACTICE, TO BECOME AN INTIMATE
OBSERVER OF THE JOB. THAT WILL BE THE KEY PORTION OF THE

TRANSITION.

WHAT THE SECRETARY-DESIGNATE WILL DECIDE TO DO ABOUT
THE TRANSITION TEAM BEFORE HE TAKES OFFICE FORMALLY IS
AN OPEN QUESTION. STAFF MEMBERS CAN ONLY GUESS WHO MAY
STAY. IT WILL DEPEND ON THEIR OWN RELATIONSHIP TO THE
PRESIDENT-ELECT AND THE INCOMING SECRETARY, WHOSE NAME IS
AS MUCH A MYSTERY TO THEM RIGHT NOW AS IT IS TO SPECULATORS
ON THE OUTSIDE.

IN ANY EVENT, VETERANS IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS AGREE, AND THE
TRANSITION TEAM MEMBERS RECOGNIZE, THAT BASIC FOREIGN
POLICY DECISIONS WILL NOT BE MADE AT THE TRANSITION LEVEL.
THE FILES OF PAST ADMINISTRATIONS ARE FILLED WITH THE
DEBRIS OF ABANDONED STAFF IDEAS AND SUGGESTED OPTIONS.
AT MOST, THE STAFF WORK IS AN INSTRUMENT IN THE FORMULATION
OF POLICY, FOR CLEARING OUT THE UNDERBRUSH TO PERMIT
DECISIONS TO BE MADE.

ROBINSON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TOSEC, PRESS COMMENTS, ASSUMPTION OF OFFICE, ORGANIZATION & MANAGEMENT
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 28 NOV 1976
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE290742
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: FZBROWN:GAR
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760441-0096
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t1976118/aaaaahaf.tel
Line Count: 143
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN PRS
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: powellba
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03 AUG 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <03 AUG 2004 by castels>; APPROVED <30 NOV 2004 by powellba>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: WASHINGTON POST ARTICLE ON TRANSITION. THE FOLLOWING IS THE FULL TEXT OF A NOVEMBER 28 WASHINGTON POST ARTICLE BY MURREY MARDER, "TRANSITION STAFF O
TAGS: SOPN, OVIP, PINT, US, WASHINGTON POST, (KISSINGER, HENRY A), (CARTER, JIMMY), (MARDER, MURREY)
To: SECRETARY
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006